



Tips for Job Fairs and Hiring Events

- **Make a plan for what companies you want to talk to at the event. Research the companies' websites and their current job openings.** The # 1 complaint from employers is that candidates simply didn't take the time to learn about the company and its opportunities in advance. Target your resumes to the specific positions you want to apply to (make multiple copies) and apply online wherever possible prior to the event. Check for networking opportunities, make contact with them – see if you can get an introduction.
- **Know the dress code.** Each job fair has its own styles and traditions. Some are [business casual](#); some suggest or require [interview attire](#). Review what the fair sponsor says about attire on their website or other promotional materials. If they don't tell, contact the fair sponsor and ask. Dress for an interview to stand out but not out of place.
- **Have plenty of copies of your resume ready.** You might need to prepare more than one version, **targeted to support the different industries or positions you are interested in.** An employer may give you another job idea on the spot — be flexible and respond appropriately.
- **Be prepared that some employers cannot accept hard copy resumes and will ask you to apply online. This is to comply with federal regulations about the way employers keep applicant data, and to manage applicant data efficiently.** This does not mean the employer is giving you the brush-off, and it does not mean the employer is wasting time by attending the fair and talking with you. The company representatives may well be taking note on candidates — you and others — in whom they are interested.
- **Prepare a 30 to 60 second commercial to use with employers.** You will want to practice it so you sound like you thought about why you're there. It might be something like, "Hello. I'm Daria Henderson, a junior in Communication Studies and Marketing. I'm looking for an internship related to marketing for next summer. I read on your website that (name of company) has an internship program in your corporate marketing department, and I've done some project work that I believe gave me skills related to the internship work. I'm very interested in your program." Get the idea? Keep in mind that some employer representatives may take control of the conversation quickly and you may do more listening than speaking, but you do want to be prepared to be proactive rather than passive.

Avoid asking about:

Salary and Benefits. (The employer should initiate discussion of those topics. A job/career fairs is not the place for a you to initiate this.)

Do ask about: Information you could not find on the employer's website.

Examples of good questions to ask the employer

- What kind of person are you seeking for the(se) position(s)?
- What particular skills do you value most?
- What do you like about working for your organization?
- What are current issues that your organization is facing that would have an impact on new hires?



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- **Be prepared with your introduction, to answer questions about yourself and to smile!**
- **Handshakes are critical.** Have a firm handshake and make good eye contact. Remember body language - watch your manners and mannerisms.
- **Be clear and engaging when you speak.** Be friendly and conversational, have a positive attitude. Stay on topic. Fairs are sometimes noisy, so speak clearly and confidently.
- **Listen to everyone around you.** If you find yourself waiting in line to speak with an employer, make your time count, Jones says. "Listen to others' conversations and implement what you hear from the employer into your own exchange."
- **Don't be misled into thinking of the fair as a social event.** Employers often send recently-hired new graduates to career fairs. Don't fall into the mistake of interacting on a social level and forgetting that you are being judged on your potential to function in the work environment.
- **Carry a simple portfolio to keep your resumes organized and ready.** Be ready to hand employers the appropriate resume (see [you might need to prepare more than one version, above](#)).
- **Employers may give you literature and give-away items** (pens, cups, t-shirts, etc.) be prepared to be able to carry them; you want to look like an organized person because that's an asset in an employee. Don't forget to say thank you.
- **Have an open mind.** You may have 12 employers on your target list to speak with. If you have extra time, or have to wait to speak with an employer, take advantage of the opportunity to chat with other employers who aren't busy. You might learn something to your advantage to your surprise. At the very least, you'll be practicing initiating a conversation in a less formal business environment — and this is an essential skill in any work environment.
- **This is your opportunity to be evaluated on more than just your resume.** In many aspects of the job search, your resume (and cover letter) is (are) all the employer sees to determine whether to interview you. At a fair, you have an opportunity to stand out in person in a way that you might not on your resume. Interpersonal skills, communication skills and work-place-appropriate social skills are critical. Many employers evaluate these skills heavily, because they want to hire people who can make a good impression on their clients and customers.
- **Ask for Business Cards** – This will ensure you will have the contact name and information for a follow up with the employer or to send a thank you card. **Remember that this is a networking opportunity.** As a job seeker, you should collect as many business cards as possible and make a good first impression. Then, when it's time to apply for an open position, you can stand out by referencing that connection in your cover letter or introduction email. **In addition, consider developing your own business cards to hand out to employers to set yourself apart.**



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Visit these Websites and Watch Videos to Help You Prepare for Job Fairs!

[How to Prepare for a Career Fair](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BXxRaLSis_Q

This video is great for first time Career Fair attendees it is divided into 3 segments: The first segment focuses on interviews with job seekers explaining how they prepare for Hiring Events and has live coaching with Job Specialists with a visual overview of a typical job fair experience. The second segment gives excellent tips from employers on what they expect from job seekers. The third segment explains the best way for job seekers to follow up after a Job Fair. This video also includes additional tips on non-verbal communication.

[How to Prepare for a Job Fair](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_cl7BHAz4uw

This video shares 4 practical tips and feedback from live employers on the way job seekers can prepare and get noticed by employers at Hiring Events. You will learn how to research companies, appropriate dress code, the importance of a firm handshake, and how to prepare an introduction and to bring your resume.

[How to Work a Career Fair](#)

This video gives an overview from a Job Specialist's perspective of an Outdoor Career Fair and offers 4 tips for job seekers to prepare for a Career Fair. The video also highlights how a job seeker uses her 60 Second Commercial or Elevator Commercial. She receives feedback from the employer including an invitation to an interview. This is a great video to learn how and when to use your 60 Second Commercial.

[Tips from Career Fair Recruiters](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Lt75KdVi5A>

This video provided several Recruiters giving practical tips on how to prepare for a Career Fair.

[How to Prepare a Self-Introduction](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IxunO4S96F4>

This video shows role plays on how to handle the "Tell me about yourself" question.

[The Art of the Elevator Pitch](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqsWkaR9Q6M>

This video gives tips on how to master the art of giving an "Elevator Pitch" in 60 seconds.